



Minutes

BARNSLEY SCHOOLS FORUM

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FORUM HELD ON THURSDAY, 20th JUNE
2019, AT KIRK BALK ACADEMY**

PRESENT

Headteacher Representatives

Paul Crook, Antoinette Drinkhill and Alison Wilks.

Governor Representative(s)

Adrian England, Sandra James and Michael Sanderson

Special Schools Representative(s)

Molly Beever

Local Authority Elected Member Representative(s)

Councillor Sarah Tattersall

Non-Schools Group Representatives

Ayesha Baggley

Officers

Josh Amahwe

Strategic Finance Manager (Core Services
Directorate) Barnsley MBC

Margaret Libreri

Service Director (Education, Early Start and
Prevention)

Richard Lynch

Head of Service (Barnsley Alliance For School
Improvement)

Shafeek Khan

Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council

1. ELECTION OF THE CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR OF THE BARNSELY SCHOOLS FORUM

Ms Libreri presented a report which outlined the process for the election of the new Chair of the Forum, together with the election of a Vice-Chair.

Ms Libreri requested nominations from those members who were present at today's meeting for the office of Chair of the Schools Forum and one member was put forward:

RESOLVED

- (1) That following a request for nominations and the subsequent poll of members, Michael Sanderson be elected and duly appointed as the Chair of the Barnsley Schools Forum for a period of two years, commencing on 20th June 2019.**

Mr Sanderson thanked his fellow members and took the Chair for today's meeting. Mr Sanderson then requested nominations for the office of Vice-Chair of the Schools Forum and one member was put forward.

RESOLVED

- (2) That following a request for nominations and the subsequent poll of members, Alison Wilks be elected and duly appointed as the Vice-Chair of the Barnsley Schools Forum for a period of two years, commencing on 20th June 2019.**

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Formal apologies for absence were received from Mr Benbow, Mr Bowen, Mr Buckley, Mrs Gilmore, Mrs Gostelow, Mr Pawson, Ms Smith and Mr Whitaker.

3. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL AND PECUNIARY INTEREST

Representatives from the Forum declared their interest concerning Agenda Item 5 of today's meeting relating to Schools Budgets.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE FORUM

RESOLVED

- (3) The minutes of the meeting of the Forum, held on 14th March 2019 were agreed as a correct record.**

5. MATTERS ARISING THROUGH CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES

Pages 3-4, Minute 3: Schools Budget (2019/20) – High Needs Funding Arrangements (Request For Follow-Up Report

Mr Amahwe briefly referred to the present status of this report.

RESOLVED

- (4) That a follow-up report on the High-Needs Budget, making reference to (a) the Local Authority's plans for managing and mitigating the over-commitment in High Needs expenditure (b) the outcome of financial modelling on the impact of commissioning intentions for SEN(D)**

education places and (c) the impact upon schools and academies, of distinctions between core and non-core funding, particularly within specialist resourced provision, will be submitted for the Forum's consideration at the meeting on 24th October.

6. SCHOOLS BUDGETS

Schools Final Outturn Position (2018/19) And Carry Forward Of Balances

Mr Amahwe presented a report on the final outturn position for schools and the carry forward of balances. The Forum noted the following:

- DSG expenditure in the Schools Block, High Needs Block, Early Years Block and Centrally Retained budgets.
- Other specific grant funding awarded to schools, including for universal infant free school meals, teachers' pay and staff cover in instances of maternity leave.
- An overview of school balances in both the primary and secondary phases.
- Centrally retained schools budgets and in particular, the continuing funding pressures in the High Needs Block.

Among the queries which emerged during consideration of the report, Mr England enquired over budget planning periods and Mr Crook requested clarification on the criteria which schools would be expected to adhere to concerning carry-forward limits. Mr Amahwe responded by referring to ESFA's guidance concerning each matter.

Mrs Wilks commented on early years funding and the take-up of places in the Borough. Ms Libreri referred to the outcomes of the Local Authority's recent child care sufficiency assessment which demonstrated that take-up was broadly higher in the community and voluntary sector than in school-based settings. According to the sufficiency assessment, the take-up of places for 3 year old children was at 96% but that take-up on the part of children aged 2 was at 72%. Ms Libreri added that the relatively lower take up of early years places by 2 year old children was a reflection of a trend, nationally and that the Local Authority had formulated an action plan, aimed at promoting the Borough's 'offer' to families with 2 year old children, together with the extended entitlement to 30 hours of free child care to those parents or carers who were eligible, as part of ensuring an increase in take-up.

RESOLVED

(5) The Schools Forum notes the final outturn position, including the carry-forward of school balances.

Schools Budgets (2019/20): Latest Budget And Funding Position

Mr Amahwe reported on the latest position on schools budgets and made reference to the following:

- Nature of the changes made to Barnsley's DSG funding allocation since it was last reported to the Forum.

- The impact of these changes upon Schools Block Funding. It was confirmed that the Central Schools Services, High Needs and Early Years Funding Blocks had not been impacted by any recoupment adjustments.
- The continuing pressures in High Needs Block Funding caused primarily by the growing need for high needs places.
- Ongoing and emerging financial risks, together with proposals to manage and mitigate such risks.

Discussion emerged over the top-up funding arrangements for EHCPs and the proposed rates to be paid to schools and academies. In response, Ms Libreri outlined the role and responsibilities of the Local Authority's recently formed SEN(D) Oversight Board upon which the Forum was represented through Ms Smith. This role included the monitoring and review of investments in all aspects of the SEN(D) system as part of ensuring value for money and the effective use of resources.

Mr Lynch reported, in detail, on the range of factors which had led to the financial pressures currently being experienced within SEN(D) provision in the Borough. As previously indicated to the Forum, a key objective of the Borough's Placement and Sufficiency Strategy would continue to be the early identification of needs and targeted support. On this, Ms Libreri confirmed that the Local Authority had received funding, following the Bercow Review into services for children with speech, language and communication needs, which would improve the capacity of Health Visitors to undertake the early identification of such needs.

Mr England echoed the importance of such an approach and its importance in ensuring children achieved their potential.

RESOLVED

- (6) The Forum notes the adjusted DSG funding allocation for the Borough during 2019/20, together with the financial positions and identified financial risks against schools DSG budgets.**

7. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

Mr Crook enquired on whether the Local Authority proposed to transfer a percentage of funding from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block as had been the case over the last two years and, if so, the percentage transfer which was being contemplated.

RESOLVED

- (7) That the Forum notes arrangements for the Local Authority's impending Autumn consultation with schools on the potential proposal to transfer a percentage of funding from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block and for the outcome of the consultation to be reported to the Forum at a future meeting.**

Mrs Beever requested that the agenda and reports for future meetings of the Forum, be distributed in the week preceding the meeting in order to give some members more time to consider these reports and to prepare any questions.

Mr Sanderson thanked members of the Forum for their attendance and contribution and expressed his appreciation and gratitude to the staff of Kirk Balk Academy for their hospitality in hosting today's meeting.

RESOLVED

- (8) The Forum pays tribute firstly to Councillor Millner and Councillor Tattersall for the contribution they have made to the work of the Forum during their tenure and, secondly, to Ms Libreri for her contribution to the work of the Forum and for a long and happy retirement.**

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Signed by the Chair of the Barnsley Schools Forum